



U.S. REPRESENTATIVE RON LEWIS STAYING IN TOUCH



ANNUAL CONSTITUENT SURVEY

SPRING 2003

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY: Tax Relief Will Provide Extra Shot in the Arm

Our economy has withstood some tough challenges the past 18 months. While the economy is growing, it's not growing quite fast enough to provide all the jobs people need. Some of my colleagues think the way out of this slump is more federal spending. I disagree and voted to help grow the economy through tax relief.

The House and Senate reached an agreement on a final jobs and growth tax package that we sent to President Bush. This final bill will inject \$200 billion into the economy during the next year and a half and help create a million new jobs, thousands of those in Kentucky.

Our jobs and growth package lowers taxes for families, most notably families with lower incomes. **When families can keep more of their own money, they use it and economic activity increases.** Tax rate reductions scheduled for

2006 will instead take effect this year, leaving money in the economy now. The threshold for the lowest tax bracket will increase, ending tax liability for

many low income taxpayers.

As a former small business owner, I know small businesses are the best job creators. By increasing the amount they can expense for investments, small business owners have a greater incentive to expand and hire.

Recent history shows tax relief helped balance the budget. After the last capital gains tax cut in 1997, tax revenue increased 38 percent in the next two years. Lower capital gains rates encourage growth and hiring new employees.

If we reduce the capital gains tax rate again, we can see these same effects. By lowering the tax on dividend earnings as well, investors, many of whom are seniors, will be able to save more.

Budget surpluses are the result of economic growth and responsible, conservative spending.

Because the economy has not been performing well, the amount of tax revenue coming in has declined. Combine this with effects of the terrorist attacks and expense of war and security, and you can see why the budget picture has not been looking good.

In order to have the resources for defense, homeland security and other responsibilities, the economy needs to be growing and more people need good jobs. Reducing taxes to give families more to spend and to encourage savings and investment is the best means toward growth.

Our economy has always managed to bounce back from tough times. But sometimes our workers and employers need a little help. Lowering taxes provides immediate help to taxpayers and the economy and also generates economic growth well into the future, an investment worth making.

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The Jobs and Growth Tax Act of 2003

Individual Tax Relief

- Increase child credit from \$600 to \$1,000
- Accelerate expansion of the 10 percent bracket
- Speed up marriage penalty relief
- Cut individual rates in 2003 rather than 2006

Business and Investment Incentives

- Increase bonus depreciation from 30 percent to 50 percent
- Increase small businesses expensing from \$25,000 to \$100,000

Dividends and Capital Gains

- Reduce to 5 percent for lowest tax bracket
- Reduce to 15 percent for all others



David James of the Louisville Fraternal Order of Police presented Rep. Lewis with a plaque in recognition of his support of issues important to the FOP.

Message from Rep. Lewis

Much has happened during Congress' first six months of work this year, from the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq to the ongoing security and economic concerns the country faces.

Your input is valuable to the work Congress will be doing the remainder of the year. **I would certainly appreciate your taking the time to share your views by completing and returning the annual constituent survey by mail or online at <http://www.house.gov/ronlewis>.**



Rep. Lewis discussed current events with North Hardin High School's J-ROTC during their March visit to Washington.



THE WAR ON TERRORISM: Helping a Peaceful Iraq Develop

War should always be a last resort, and I believe all options were exhausted before President Bush made the decision to send our troops into action in Iraq. Our military was ultimately successful, and the nation recognizes their service. We honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice and will not be coming home to a reunion with their family members. We owe these heroes a great debt of gratitude.

Our military coalition continues to look for members of Saddam Hussein's regime, weapons and Saddam Hussein himself. **Our victory in Iraq helps ensure that weapons Saddam Hussein possessed will not find their way into terrorist hands.** We also need to hold members of the old Iraqi regime accountable for the terrible torture, imprisonment and deaths they inflicted.

The difficult task of rebuilding and helping the Iraqis form a new government is also underway. A democratic government is not easy to set up and maintain, especially in a nation as divided as Iraq.

We have no interest in occupying Iraq, but I believe the United States does have an obligation to work with our allies, the United Nations and international aid groups to help provide necessities for Iraq. It will take time, but if we work together and with the Iraqi people, we can leave them with freedom and a more productive country.

As we've seen in the recent bombing in Saudi Arabia, the war on terrorism is not over. However, the win in Iraq moves us closer to the ultimate goal of stopping terrorists and those who give them money, weapons and other support.

Special operations forces continue to track al-Qaida members hiding in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other places. Our military in Iraq will continue to find those connected with Saddam Hussein and those with ties to terrorists and weapons sources. **In order to stop networks of terrorists around the world who still seek to harm us, we will need to work with other countries and continue our enhanced intelligence efforts.**

Homeland Security

Since Congress approved its creation last fall, the new Department of Homeland Security has been reorganizing agencies with security and antiterrorism roles. The following functions are now in DHS:

- **Border Security**
- **Immigration and Citizenship**
- **Airport and Port Security**
- **Intelligence Coordination**
- **Emergency Readiness**
- **State and Local Assistance**

Visit **www.ready.gov** or call **1-800-BE-READY** to learn more about how you can prepare for all types of emergencies.

One thing is certain: the United States still cares deeply about freedom and peace around the world. While we can't solve all the problems, **I believe the United States, by continuing its efforts against terrorism and other threats, will increase the chance of peace and security, not just for ourselves, but for other nations who share these goals.** These efforts to stop terrorism and encourage peace are not easy, just like rebuilding Iraq won't be easy. But by helping advance freedom, we will undermine terror.

Key 2003 Votes

Ban On Human Cloning H.R. 534	✓ YES
Military/Reconstruction in Iraq H.R. 1559	✓ YES
Jobs and Growth Tax Relief H.R. 2	✓ YES
Responsible Federal Budget H. Con. Res. 95	✓ YES
Special Education Improvement H.R. 1350	✓ YES
Medical Malpractice Reform H.R. 5	✓ YES
National AMBER Alert H.R. 1104	✓ YES
Block new U.S. Oil Exploration H.R. 6 amendment	✓ NO
Reduce Social Security Fraud H.R. 743	✓ YES
Pension Protections H.R. 1000	✓ YES

Continuing Work Toward a Buyout

This spring has been a wet one for Second District farmers working to get crops planted, but as farmers know all too well, weather is just one of the uncertainties they face.

Tobacco farmers also know the uncertainty of tobacco policy, as many have watched the value of their quota decline. I have heard from many of you in support of a buyout of the tobacco program. **During the past few months, I have continued to work with my colleagues from tobacco states in order to try to move buyout legislation through Congress.** As you know, this is not an easy process, and those of us from tobacco states are a minority in Congress.

As in the last session of Congress, I have again cosponsored legislation introduced by Congressman Ernie Fletcher from Kentucky, Congressman Mike McIntyre from North Carolina and Congressman Virgil Goode from Virginia. **We need to all work together to produce the best legislation possible.**

Congressman Bill Jenkins from Tennessee, the new chairman of the Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Specialty Crops, is working with all of us from tobacco areas. Chairman Jenkins would like to get buyout legislation moving through

his subcommittee soon and is working to produce consensus legislation from aspects of both the McIntyre and Fletcher bills.

I will certainly continue to support Chairman Jenkins' efforts here in the House. Over in the Senate, Senators from tobacco states are also drafting buyout legislation. I believe that having legislation start in the Senate would be helpful to the process. If legislation came from the Senate, we would have a better chance in the House of protecting it from amendments.

Many farm families and communities depend on tobacco income and will continue to depend on it even if there is a buyout. We need to keep tobacco production in areas where it traditionally has taken place. **Ultimately, I want Kentucky farmers who choose to grow tobacco to still have the opportunity to do so and not have their production move to other states or out of the country.**

As I've said in the past, this issue is all about trade-offs and the political possibility of moving a large bill without it collapsing, as we saw happen to the McCain bill a few years ago. Passing legislation is never a quick process, but I am committed to representing Kentucky farmers' interests.



2003 CONSTITUENT SURVEY

Please answer the following questions and include any comments. Then, cut out, fold and return your responses, making sure to include your return address.

Two members of the household can respond, one on each side of the answer choices. **Or, complete the survey online at www.house.gov/ronlewis/**

1. Please rank these policy issues in order of importance to you (1 being most important).

Person One

Person Two

Improving the Economy

Balanced Budget

Homeland Security

Medicare Prescription Benefit

Affordable Health Care

Education

Energy Security

Other

3. Would you be in favor of legislation that bans partial birth abortion?

Person One

Yes No

Person Two

Yes No

4. Would you support allowing younger workers to invest some of their Social Security taxes in personal investment accounts if they choose to?

Yes No

Yes No

Comments:

2. Should Congress take further action to help improve the economy and the outlook for new jobs?

Yes

No

Yes

No

5. How long should our military be involved in helping Iraq rebuild and set up a new government?

As long as it takes

The rest of the year

Three months

They should come home now

Place
First-Class
Postage
Here

(Please Print)

U.S. Representative Ron Lewis
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Comprehensive Child Protection Legislation Signed Into Law

What began as an effort to expand a nation wide alert system to help find missing children resulted in a comprehensive bill to improve child safety and increase punishment for crimes against children.

When it comes to our children, we should do all we can to help protect them and punish those who commit crimes against them. I'm pleased Congress passed this legislation quickly and that President Bush has signed it into law.

Some of the law's provisions include:

- Nationwide AMBER Alert system which will have a national coordinator to issue bulletins on TV and radio about missing children and help states establish AMBER Alert systems
- Mandatory life sentences for twice-convicted child sex offenders
- Authority for federal law enforcement to request wiretapping and electronic surveillance to investigate child pornography
- Prohibits distribution of computer-simulated "virtual" child pornography
- Limits sentencing options for those convicted of crimes against children

Defense Chairman Visits Knox

The Second District is fortunate to be home to Fort Knox and its advanced training capabilities for the Army's armored forces. In fact, many who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom trained at Fort Knox.

As part of efforts to improve national security, the Defense Department is moving forward with plans to modernize the military. Important research for the Army's transformation projects is taking place at Fort Knox.

The Army is working to develop "Future Combat Systems." Its goal is to transform to a more



Rep. Lewis presented a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol to John Hardin High School's J-ROTC.

mobile and powerful combat force. **Researchers have been working at Fort Knox to develop and test new vehicles and weapons for the Army's transformation.** Troops also come to Fort Knox to train at its urban combat center.

This spring, I brought the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee to visit Fort Knox. Chairman Hunter is responsible for overseeing the national defense budget, a very large task. **I was pleased he was able to see the excellent work being done at Fort Knox to advance the Army's transformation.**

Since the war on terrorism began, Congress has increased the national defense budget. **This year's budget provides the Department of Defense with the resources it needs** for its mission to eradicate terrorism, including transforming military capabilities to meet new threats.

With increasing demands on the military and the uncertainty faced in the war on terrorism, our troops need top-notch training and the most advanced equipment available. These two mission areas are Fort Knox's specialty. I hope the Army will continue to use Fort Knox as a player in its transformation process and as a top training facility for armored troops.

Lewis Continues Support of Value-Based Issues

Some of the topics that constituents contact me about most often have to do with their values. Often these issues produce different viewpoints, but I believe they are important for Congress to address.

During this session, I expect we will vote on the following bills that I support:

- A ban on partial birth abortion
- Protect the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance
- Prohibit desecration of the American flag
- Expand opportunities for faith-based and community groups to participate in federal human services programs

Addressing Health Costs and Access

Health care costs, coverage and accessibility affect everyone across the Second District. So far, we passed the first of what I hope are a number of bills to improve our health care system.

First, we approved changes to the medical liability system in order to keep malpractice insurance costs under control so more doctors stay in the medical profession and care for patients.

Some Kentucky doctors have closed their practices, reduced services to patients or moved to Indiana where premiums are more affordable. As a result, fewer doctors are able to deliver babies, patients have to travel farther to see a doctor and emergency rooms are understaffed.

Soon the House will again address Medicare modernization and prescription drug coverage. Medicare serves thousands of Kentucky patients, and it is difficult to keep such a large program current and flexible to meet changing needs. However, in order to add a much-needed prescription benefit to Medicare, we also need to improve the way Medicare does business.



Members of the Kentucky Hospital Association shared their views on health care with Rep. Lewis.

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